

# The Doctor's Apprentice

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Summary: The eleventh Doctor has never pulled a teenager along for the ride before. Maybe this one, with a sad life and an odd name, is not the best fit for the TARDIS. Or maybe he's just the right one for the job. MODERN AU, told in a unique style I made up myself! Cool, yeah? Teen for sad stuff.

## 1. Thinking Twice

**\*\*Hey, all! Ami here! I know I haven't updated in a while, but that's honestly not my fault. However, I can't explain it here. It takes too long.\*\***

**\*\*I'm here for two reasons. One, keep in mind that the Doctor belongs to BBC and Hiccup belongs to Cressida Cowell and Dreamworks.\*\***

**\*\*Two, I'm trying out a different style of chapter organization. That is, I have no chapter organization. These one-shot type stories are not in chronological order whatsoever. They're from all over the timeline. Since I can't think of a defined name for such a style, and this is Doctor-Who related, I have decided to name this style of writing . . . \_River Song style\_!\*\***

**\*\*Clever, yeah? Because, you know, River and the Doctor never meet in chronological order either. I'm overexplaining this, aren't I? Well, enjoy the story! And leave a note!\*\***

**\* \* \***

><p>"Doctor! Doctor!"<p>

The Doctor closed his eyes, huffing in frustration. He listened to the yells echoing through the TARDIS and wondered briefly if this had been a mistake. It had been a while since he'd taken on a male companion, after all. The girls were so easy. For the most part, they

stuck close by and hung on his every word. But this guy  
â€|

"Doctor!"

The Doctor looked up, his eyebrows furrowed in frustration. "Lost? Again, Hiccup? That's the â€|" Gazing up, he mouthed numbers silently before continuing. "That's the fifth time so far!"

The impatient, often sarcastic voice boomed in the hallways. "I'm not lost! I'm just â€| lost."

The Doctor smiled a little. He reached out, slapping the walls of the TARDIS affectionately. "Just turn left three times!" he yelled back.

"Oh, sure. That makes so much sense."

"Of course it does. I'm the Doctor and this is my TARDIS and it makes sense!"

"But-"

"Left!"

The Doctor heard Hiccup groaned, and the time lord groaned too. Another reason he shouldn't have taken Hiccup along for the ride. He didn't like teenagers all that much. Too young, too impulsive. At least Rose had been sensible, and she was practically out of her teens. The sarcasm - for crying out loud, the constant sarcasm - didn't help matters either. Why had he extended the invitation to Hiccup, the Doctor asked himself silently.

"Thinking twice about this?" The Doctor spun around. His lanky companion stood tall, arms crossed across his green hoodie and thick vest. The Doctor sighed - Hiccup was also so much smarter than the others. How could you be mysterious around someone who seemed to figure out everything? Where was the fun in that?

But, as he met Hiccup's eyes, the Doctor managed a smile. He'd never really forgotten the reason he had parked the TARDIS in front of the Haddock house for the second time - the reason he had grinned widely at the astonished teenage boy, reached out a hand, and asked, "Coming?"

Yes, Hiccup was different from the rest of them. The Doctor had seen the longing in the boy's eyes, a yearning almost as strong as what the Doctor often saw in mirrors. Hiccup had wanted to have a grand, marvelous, fantastic, brilliant adventure. He had wanted the danger. Why else would he have chased after the Doctor into the flaming factory?

Hiccup didn't want the sad, tired, heavy life he lived. The Doctor had caught glimpses of the boy's life - the cruel classmates, the estranged father, the mocking teachers, the snooty town. The time traveler had seen the constant pain the teen lived with, and he didn't think it much over after that.

He just knew Hiccup needed a chance.

So the Doctor grinned, tugged at his bowtie, and winked at Hiccup.  
"Ha! Thinking twice - where's the fun in that?"

## 2. Gone

"\_We're going to have to amputate."\_

"\_What could have \_caused \_that?"\_

"\_Heart rate?"\_

"\_One-forty-six and rising."\_

"\_His blood pressure's going nuts too."\_

"\_Hang in there, alright?"\_

"\_Sedative's not working."\_

Hiccup's head hurt. It hurt so much. Why did it hurt? And why, when he opened his eyes, did he see that bright, bright light? Ugh, his head felt worse. He took several deep breaths.

Then a bomb of panic exploded in his body. Everything in him screamed, flooding him with conflicting messages. Run. Stay still. Scream. Be silent. Move your toes. Freeze. He felt himself shaking, and he could hear faint yells and shouts. "Help." He wanted to say that. "Help." But it didn't seem to come out right, or even at all.

And then - \_OW\_! Suddenly he could feel \_it\_, and \_it hurt\_. Why? All thoughts slid away as he screamed and screamed and screamed. He was so lost.

"Doctor?" he managed. The Doctor would help. He had to. He had to stop the pain. "Doctor!" He listened, but he only heard the strange voices mumbling, yelling, chattering. "\_Doctor\_!"

The white light filled his vision, and Hiccup slept.

I'm alive?

That was his first thought, when his vision cleared. Was he alive? Did they have hospital rooms in heaven? It was so white, Hiccup decided. Even the pale blue curtains cloaking the left side of his bed seemed too white, if such a thing was even possible. His bed sheets glowed, the walls glowed, his gown - what happened to his normal clothes? - everything was blinding.

Hiccup closed his eyes and listened. He heard normal hospital things, like beeping, and quiet, murmuring voices. The voices, he realized slowly, weren't American. They were British, like the Doctor's.

\_The Doctor!\_

"Doctor!" he blurted out, throwing his shoulders forward in an attempt to sit up. He was punished with a sharp blast of pain and several frantic beeps from something to his left. Hiccup jumped when something - or rather, someone, moved on his right.

"Nope," said the distinctly British male voice. "Just the nurse here. Hello."

Hiccup blinked rapidly, trying to clear his again foggy vision. "Huh?" he managed. \_Oh, very intelligent there, Hiccup.\_ He tried to roll his eyes but that only made his vision blurrier.

"I'm the nurse. You're in the hospital? I always â€¦ I mean, I always thought, in those shows on the tube, they ought to say that straight out. Really, the patient always asks. Why don't the doctors or nurses just say it outright?"

Hiccup ignored most of the babbling. After a moment, he forced out, "I know I'm in the hospital."

"Oh." The voice, and the blur that must be the man, paused and sighed. "Well, good."

Hiccup searched for any memory he could pin his finger on. He had been traveling with the Doctor, of course. Toothless had just accidentally broken something, again. He'd been apologizing to the Doctor, who had been complaining.

"\_Why did I ever think it was a good idea to let you bring a dragon in here, Hiccup? He barely even fits through the doors!\_"

"\_Oh sure, like it's his fault the doors are too small!\_"

Hiccup strained for the rest of the scene, but it faded away. "I can't remember much," he mumbled, sucking in air and licking his parched lips.

"Here's some water," said the blur, moving around and waving something in front of his face. Hiccup took a wild guess as to what to do and slid his head forward in a turtle-like fashion. He felt an amazing sense of relief as deliciously, wonderfully cold water slid down his throat.

The next question, an important question, flashed in his mind. "What year is it?" he asked, his voice rasping.

"Oh, it's 2011." Hiccup figured that was a pretty weird question, but the blur didn't seem fazed. Maybe a lot of people asked that. The blur continued. "Summer. Nothing too big in the news."

Hiccup decided to ignore the blur's coolness and focused more on the date. If it was summer, in 2011, then â€¦ he was back in time, more than a year! Well, Hiccup amended, about two years before "his" time, anyway. But why? Had the TARDIS gotten stuck here? The blur had just said nothing interesting was going on, so they couldn't have come here to do any acts of heroism. Right?

Hiccup sighed. If they hadn't needed to come here, and it was out of the way, then the Doctor had chosen here - now, rather. Why?

The teen closed his eyes. And why did he feel only five toes?

He didn't want to think about it.

But he had to \_know\_.

Hiccup strained to reach the blankets, but his arms refused. Not enough energy, he supposed. "Help â€¦ I have to â€¦ see â€¦"

The blur seemed to hesitate. Then it moved toward Hiccup. Hiccup shivered as the blanket was lifted off his torso. He blinked several more times to clear his vision. Then, with a growing sense of dread in his stomach, he looked down at his left leg.

What was left of his left leg, anyway.

Tears clogged his vision, and he shook his head. Then, however, his vision swam even more. Gritting his teeth, his head dropped back onto the pillows. He stared up at the ceiling. He knew he was in shock. He knew later the full enormity of the situation would slam onto his shoulders. For now, however, he simply let the tears fall.

He heard the blur sigh. "I'll leave you be. You seem to be doing fine." Footsteps echoed in the room, and Hiccup guessed the blur was at the door.

"If you need anything â€¦" the blur hesitated. "If you need anything, I'll just be in the nurse's station. Just call for Rory."

Hiccup felt the room grow emptier, and he let his tears rain down his face freely.

### 3. Like the Stars

"Who is he?"

The Doctor groaned, his eyes studying the cloudy sky before dropping down to stare tiredly at River. River simply blinked. Hiccup didn't think he'd ever seen anybody look that shocked before.

Here it comes.

There it was.

Ah. Right on time.

It always came, eventually. People's eyes always filled with the same emotion whenever they looked at Hiccup. Pure, unfiltered repulsion. Regardless of the thousands of disturbed looks that had been tossed Hiccup's way, they never lost their sting.

Hiccup shoved his palms into the pockets of his old jeans and stared down at his grungy old tennis shoes. Technically, they weren't his. Since his mother's disappearance, his father had never cleaned out her closet. Ten-year-old Hiccup found her tennis shoes under a pile of old Southern cooking magazines. The shoes hadn't fit until last year, and Hiccup doubted he'd ever be able to get rid of them.

Of course, wearing women's shoes had gotten him more teasing than ever. He'd had to go searching for them in alley trash bins more than a few times. Such was the life of the local militia commander's repulsive son.

"Doctor. Who is he?"

Hiccup jerked his chin up and rolled his eyes. "We've met before," he said dryly. River's mouth twitched, no doubt in confusion. "Though," Hiccup continued. "the Doctor tells me the paths of mine and yours tangle intricately." Ah, the vocabulary. He had gotten used to speaking the fanciful words on his mind, mostly because the Doctor didn't seem to mind. But, judging by the curl in River's lip, Hiccup's vocabulary was just another reason to hate him.

The Doctor cut between them. "Ah, yes, sorry, River, sweetie. This is Hiccup Haddock."

"Hiccup?" River chuckled, a menacing little noise that tied knots around Hiccup's stomach. He felt his heart darken. Was anywhere different? Was escape really so hard? He'd seen the stars, fought a Sontaaran, did some sort of hippie commune with Oods - which had been way more fun than he'd want to admit - and he'd seen the stars. His favorite part. A thousand gleaming things, that looked so tiny but were really so big and complex and amazing.

When Hiccup was eleven, he had wanted to be a star. Stars were very, very, very far away from Berk. And he'd figured that stars didn't get their wrists tied to trees by their cousins.

He jerked his thoughts back into the conversation to hear the Doctor saying, "I don't want to hear it, River!" Hiccup felt his eyes widen as he stared at the look on the Doctor's face. He'd seen glimpses of it before, but there was no getting used to the terrifying, quiet, explosive look of granite that would sometimes glare from the Doctor's face.

Evidently, Hiccup noticed as he glanced at River, she didn't see it much either. Her mocking, cruel face had melted away to reveal an almost embarrassed, repentant one.

The Doctor turned to look at Hiccup. A grin grew on the teen's face as the Doctor grinned and announced, "Hiccup and the TARDIS and me. That's how it is. He's sticking with us."

#### 4. Someone Old, Someone New

Hiccup, the Doctor grumbled to himself, had a nasty habit of throwing the TARDIS doors open so dramatically that the poor wooden things often got scratched or dented. This one time, however, the Doctor would spare Hiccup the lecture. It wasn't every day, after all, that a boy got knighted by King Arthur himself.

"Well, Sir Hiccup now, is it?" the Doctor asked, smiling wryly at the beaming teen.

Hiccup laughed softly, his palms rubbing the edge of the console. "I guess," he said, shrugging.

As the Doctor studied the screen, checking on the TARDIS cameras for stowaways - ever since the whole episode with that renegade Angel, he'd always been careful - something tugged at his mind. He tried to ignore it, but his curiosity refused to leave well enough alone. The Doctor quickly twisted to face his "apprentice", as he had taken to

calling Hiccup recently.

"So, I was wondering â€¦ wondering about Marina." Hiccup seemed to stiffen, and the Doctor clarified. "What you think of her, I mean."

Hiccup's eyes roamed the console almost frantically - almost. "She's nice."

Trying to be casual, the Doctor turned back to the screen and added, "Pretty too."

"Yeah â€¦ I guess."

"Sharp as your new sword."

Hiccup looked up at the Doctor. "And your point would be â€¦" A tint of frustration bled through his voice.

The Doctor shrugged. "I dunno, I just thought â€¦" his voice faded away.

"That I would fall for her," Hiccup finished, his shoulders jutting up as he bowed his head, understandably tired.

"Seems she's taken a fancy to you, you know." The Doctor risked a peek at his apprentice's face. The boy's eyebrows were drawn together tightly, his normally sharp green eyes coated in a dreamy film.

"Yeah," Hiccup murmured.

"And you â€¦ no?"

Hiccup nodded his head before the Doctor even finished speaking. "Nah," he said, a forcefully light, careless tone.

That was the moment the Doctor understood. A smile pulled at his lips, but he stuffed it down. His eyebrows soared above his lashes as he looked back up at the screen. "That girl in Berk must be incredible."

"She- what?!" Hiccup's head shot up, and a loud crack told the Doctor the motion had hurt. "Augh, Thor almighty," Hiccup groaned, cupping his hands around the back of his neck and scowling fiercely.

After letting the teen suffer in silence, the Doctor smiled widely. "Well?"

Hiccup looked at his scruffy sneakers. "What?"

"The girl. What's her name?"

Hiccup's shoulders dropped, and the Doctor sucked back a sigh. "I â€¦ she's just â€¦" Hiccup crossed his thin arms, his eyes closing slowly. "She hates me, Doc. I'm sure of it. She's just so much cooler, and all the guys like her, and I don't think she'd even care if I died."

The Doctor studied the drained figure before him. He could identify

with Hiccup - all that suffering, all that pain, in one skinny body. He wanted to tell Hiccup it would be fine, that the girl would see the light eventually, that happily ever after happened every day. But the Doctor knew better.

So he asked the only question he could. "But you still wait for her?"

Hiccup's lips twitched upwards. "She's â€¦ worth it."

The Doctor never could have asked for a better answer. Or a sadder one. But, he reminded himself as he yanked at a lever, sometimes the best things had the saddest wrappings. He should know.

Hiccup looked up at the Doctor, who glanced back and caught the nervously hopeful spark in the human's eyes. The Doctor struggled for something to say, something that might help. He hummed for a moment. "Used to know a fellow like you. Smart, traveled with me, wore a lot of plaid, liked a girl who didn't like him back."

Hiccup gazed back down, and the Doctor couldn't read his face as he said, "Huh. What happened?"

The Doctor revisited old memories, good ones, ones he'd nearly forgotten. He smiled. "They had a fantastic wedding."

The boy laughed. "You're making this up," he protested, but the flush was in his cheeks and the life had returned to his eyes. The Doctor slammed his fists down on a few buttons. He knew that was Hiccup's way of saying, "Thank you."

## 5. Something Like Switzerland

"Dude, you guys are \_potatoes\_!"

The moment it came out of Hiccup's mouth, he knew it had been a very, very stupid thing to say. Here he was, surrounded by aliens - odd-looking aliens, but still aliens - with about thirty guns pointed at his chest, and all Hiccup could do was compare them to vegetables.

"Well, Hiccup, don't confuse everyone with your intelligence," the Doctor mumbled, just loud enough for his apprentice to hear.

"We are not poh-tay-toes, young man," the potato-alien in charge growled gruffly. "We are Sontarans!" His fellow potatoes bowed their bodies a bit, and Hiccup realized they were probably trying to nod. Normal nodding, Hiccup admitted, had to be impossible without a neck.

"Still-" Hiccup began, but the Doctor, for both their sakes, cut him off.

"What exactly is going on here?" the Doctor asked, his tone respectful but intimidating all the same.

"We are storming the premises, Doctor," the Sontaran general replied. He locked gazes with the Doctor, and Hiccup suppressed a shudder when he noticed the general's dark, perfectly round eyes. "The Sontarans



have long been at war with the Dyvreenees empire. You are, frankly, a liability, a very unpredictable force."

Hiccup blinked, perplexed. "But we're not even doing anything," he protested. "Just let us go on our way!"

The Doctor sighed at his apprentice's naivety. "They're Sontarans. Once they get their minds on something, absolutely nothing can stand in their way." He looked back at the general, his eyes cold. "And they've decided we need to be restrained."

"Or terminated," the general added.

Hiccup's brow wrinkled. "But â€¦" he said, struggling for anything that might give him and the Doctor a chance. The answer came to him in a flash. "Switzerland!" he blurted out.

"What?" the Doctor and the general said simultaneously.

Hiccup nodded in relief. "Switzerland," he repeated. "In World War II! Nobody attacked or invaded Switzerland, even though it was smack-in-the-middle of everything, right?"

The Doctor's eyes narrowed. "I've got it so far," he said slowly. The Sontaran general motioned impatiently for Hiccup to hurry up.

"Right," Hiccup said, his words tripping over themselves as he blurted them out. "Because Switzerland was small, but it was powerful - extremely powerful. Everyone knew that if they went after Switzerland, it would be like running into a hurricane with only a shotgun. They would be doomed."

"I am familiar with Switzerland's strong army," the Sontaran general acknowledged. "I am not familiar, however, with how that relates to this situation."

Hiccup summoned every inch of his courage and he crossed his arms across his chest. "The Doctor - you know him. But you've obviously never beat him. You know he's a threat. So why haven't you killed him off before?" The Sontaran blinked, almost nervously, and Hiccup, encouraged, continued louder. "Because you can't. Because he escaped. He's so powerful that you can't stop him." Impulsively, he stepped forward so that he was almost nose to nose with the alien leader. "And if someone has that much power," Hiccup whispered, "then God help the poor soul who attacks him."

There was silence, absolute silence, for a very long minute. Hiccup's thoughts raced around his head like horses or racecars - he'd done it, he'd convinced them; but no, he hadn't, and the bullets would rip through his body; but no, the Sontarans looked uncertain, so surely he'd said the right thing.

Finally, the head Sontaran straightened and looked over Hiccup's head at the Doctor. "We will meet again, Doctor," the Sontaran growled. "And perhaps next time, you will not escape our entire army." He belted out several orders, and the group of Sontarans marched into formation. Hiccup watched the walls shake as the band of fighters stomped away. He blinked rapidly and sighed.

He felt the Doctor's hand on his shoulder. "Very good," the Doctor said, a laugh tugging at his voice. Hiccup grinned up at the time lord. He'd done it. He'd actually done it. He'd done something good. It was, Hiccup decided, a very good feeling that had settled in his chest.

"It was," Hiccup agreed. "It was pretty good."

## 6. The Crying Interface

Hiccup rubbed his neck nervously as he ran. He could hear the Doctor, his arms probably full of wires and panels, running clumsily through the halls ahead of him. Where they were, he wasn't really sure. But Hiccup had gotten used to that. Half the time, he never knew where the Doctor had taken him - because the action hit them the moment they stepped out of the TARDIS, sometimes even the moment they landed. Usually, in these situations, Hiccup just gathered information as he ran from whatever happened to be chasing them at the time.

Now, for example, he knew they were on a flying ship. He'd looked out a window about ten minutes ago to see a vast blanket of stars and a wing protruding from wherever they were. It wasn't rocket science. Or, he realized with a chuckle, it actually kind of was. \_Oh, come on, that was lame.\_

He rammed into the Doctor, sending both of them tumbling to the floor. Hiccup, from his stomach-to-floor position, shot the Doctor a glare. The Doctor simply smiled widely. "Welcome, Hiccup," he said brightly, pushing himself onto his feet, "to one of the only ships in the galaxy where there is nobody mad at us."

Hiccup leaned against a wall and slid to his feet. "Yet," he said dryly.

"How positive," the Doctor fired back. Hiccup gave him a cheesy, mocking grin. The Doctor in turn reached out and fluffed Hiccup's hair. Hiccup rolled his eyes, turned, and surveyed the large room they had tumbled into.

The place was huge, with long, wide, and semi-transparent sheets hanging around the perimeter. Hiccup glanced up at the curious squares of white light spaced evenly across the black ceiling. It didn't look like there were any lightbulbs, he noted, but his attention was only drawn to them for a second. What quickly drew his attention were the beds suspended from the ceiling. They were all empty, except for one in the far corner.

"Oh, Thor," Hiccup said, impulsively taking a step back. "This is a morgue."

The Doctor actually rolled his eyes. "No, look. Would dead bodies need to be hooked up to so much equipment?" Shaking his head, he began to weave between the beds. "This is a \_hospital\_."

Hiccup hardened his jaw, embarrassed. "Well," he grumbled, "you can't blame me. Looked like a morgue."

The Doctor wasn't listening. Instead, he stood, silent, looming over

the only occupied bed. Something seemed to squeeze Hiccup's stomach. Ignoring the sudden cold panic swelling in his brain, he forced himself to move one foot in front of the other, toward the Doctor and the body.

The body was, Hiccup saw as he drew nearer, that of a boy around his age - perhaps a bit older. He was almost deathly pale, and Hiccup shivered. "He's my age," he mumbled.

The Doctor nodded. He whipped his sonic screwdriver out of his pocket and waved it over the boy's torso several times. When the time lord peered at his device, he said, "Or not. Could be a lot older."

"He looks eighteen."

The Doctor snorted. "Right, and I look thirty-three, but I'm not."

Hiccup thought the Doctor was more of a twelve-year-old, but he decided not to point that out. Instead, he said, "Well, what is he then?"

The Doctor gazed at the immobile boy's face. "He's not human. Not any more, at least." Hiccup blinked. Although the Doctor was turned away from him, he must have sensed Hiccup's confusion, so he added, "Sometimes alien technology alters a human. Whatever this boy is, he's not turning up on my registers." The Doctor bounced on his toes. "Well, he is, but the registers aren't working, because he's obviously not five hundred pounds with three heads."

Hiccup decided not to ask.

Suddenly, he was aware of another presence in the room. Call it intuition, call it the hairs on the back of one's neck, call it traveling with the Doctor for too long, but he felt it all the same. Slowly, he turned around. Standing five feet away was a glowing girl.

All he could say was: "Hey, Doctor. There's a glowing girl." \_Wow, give the guy a prize.\_

The Doctor didn't bother turning around. "Yes, the siren, the nurse, the interface."

"Great," was all that Hiccup could think to say. He raised a tentative hand to wave at the glowing girl. She had dark, looping hair that fell across her sleeveless, green-tinted nightgown. Actually, she was glowing green. Hiccup knew the rest of the male population of the galaxy probably would have thought she was pretty, but he thought â€| nah. Not really. She surveyed him with pale eyes with an almost vacant expression. But then she lowered her head, and the edges of her lips pulled downward. A tear dribbled from her eye.

"Hey," Hiccup asked, stepping forward. "Are you okay?" She didn't respond but simply hovered there, a strange sadness emitting from her.

"I'm fine," the Doctor replied. He turned around, looking at Hiccup curiously. "Why?" Hiccup glanced at him, then back at her. The Doctor

noticed what Hiccup saw. "Oh," the man muttered, his eyes concerned as he looked at her.

Hiccup turned around. The boy hadn't moved. He simply lay there, and suddenly he looked very lonely. Hiccup understood what the siren meant, somehow. "She's sad because he's alone."

The Doctor turned back and forth, peering at the siren, then the boy on the table, then back to the siren. "That's impossible," he scoffed halfheartedly. "She's an interface. She can't feel."

Hiccup shook his head wildly, and his bangs fluttered across his eyes. "Well, you're wrong then," he retorted. "Something's up with that guy." He raised a hand, then hesitantly, slowly, laid it on the sleeping boy's arm. "Hey, man," Hiccup murmured. "Hey, wake up." For once, the Doctor was silent. Hiccup shook the boy a bit. "Hey, wake up," Hiccup repeated. Nothing. Hiccup shook harder, his voice growing in volume. "Dude, wake up now!" He slapped both hands on the boy's arms and shook so hard that the bed rattled. "Wake up!" Hiccup yelled.

And then the boy's eyes snapped open. The two bright blue orbs swiveled around the room frantically, finally resting on Hiccup's face. "Ah â€| ah â€| I â€|" the guy struggled to say. In a flash, he had propped his upper torso up on his elbows, then on his hands.

Hiccup had no idea what to do. So he dropped his hands at his sides, then hastily threw one out for a handshake. "I'm Hiccup. Haddock. And you?"

The older teen hesitated for a moment. His gaze drifted from Hiccup, to the Doctor, to the siren, then to Hiccup's hand. "I'm â€|" the guy seemed to remember something, and reached for Hiccup's hand. "I'm Jack. I think I'm Jack," he said softly, pumping Hiccup's arm up and down.

## 7. River

"River." The Doctor pondered the word. Had he meant it as a question, a statement, a demand, an order? He wasn't certain. But he said it again. "River."

River's thick mane of curls bounced as she glanced up at him from the console. With his eyes, the Doctor traced the lines carved into her face. She was aging, though she tried to hide this inevitable fact of her biology from him. Sometimes the Doctor wondered if she had forgotten â€" he could sense time passing, and he knew hers was slowly racing away from her.

Mistaking his words and facial expression for a certain question, River returned to fiddling with the controls. "He's asleep," she said.

The Doctor knew this, but he instead said, "Can't blame him." He studied his long, thin fingers. They were blue, reflecting the calming glow of the TARDIS. Oh, his good old blue box. He smiled.

River's chin dipped in agreement. The glance she shot his way told him she knew there must be more. The Doctor hurried to the point. "I saw you tucking him in."

For a moment, River froze. Her arms were perched, painfully straight, on the rim of the console. She stared at the Doctor, her eyes flecked with guilt and something else, something the Doctor couldn't precisely name. Then the moment disappeared. She smiled smoothly. As River looked from the Doctor to the stairs leading to the rooms, she said, "I wouldn't say I was tucking him in. He's seventeen! He was exhausted. I was just helping him to his room."

The Doctor knew he had her there. He hopped forward, bouncing on his toes and hooking his thumbs on his suspenders. "You fluffed his pillow," he said, jeering slightly. "You kissed him on the forehead!"

River's stare bore into the dashboard. She darted to the other side and the Doctor smiled widely as he peered at her through the wires and poles.

"River?" It was obviously a question this time — a request for acknowledgement. A minute passed, in which River busied herself with the TARDIS and the Doctor tasted blood on his bitten tongue.

Finally and suddenly, River pulled her elegant fingers away from the controls and locked eyes with the Doctor. "Is there something wrong with that?" she challenged. Her head tilted, eyes wide in supposed innocence.

The Doctor moved to stand beside her. Leaning against the console, he asked, "Why?" He crossed his arms, then uncrossed them and rested his palms on the edge of the dashboard. "You've always been rather, well, cold to him. Why the change?"

River gave a tired smile. Her shoulders drooped. "Spoilers," she whispered, her eyes streaking across the controls.

Nodding, the Doctor chuckled. "Of course." He watched River press her lips together and stroke the TARDIS. "There's nothing wrong with it," he murmured. His thumbs rubbed circles on the TARDIS.

Her smile quivered in perplexion. "Excuse me?"

Nudging her shoulder gently, the Doctor muttered, "I don't think he minds you being his mother."

River huffed, cleared her throat, and bowed her head. Her curls masked whatever expression was on her face. The Doctor wondered if she knew much about Hiccup's real mother. Hiccup had shown him pictures of a husky, tall woman with her wispy dark hair pulled into a tight ponytail. She'd radiated confidence. Hiccup would gaze at her pictures in longing and embarrassment. He tried to pretend those pictures were papers from his past. But of course, the Doctor knew better. It said something when the teen hadn't said goodbye to his father, but had snatched photos of his mother from his room.

Another minute passed before she spoke again. "I think I'll retire to my chambers. We can call it a day." She grinned in self-confidence before gracefully ascending the stairs. Her long, slightly torn red

gown drifted around her ankles.

The Doctor watched her leave.

## 8. The Lights Go Out

Hiccup never thought the TARDIS could be so . . . dark. His fingers grasped blindly in front of him. "Somebody," he grumbled to himself, "needs to change the lights in here." Did the TARDIS even have lightbulbs? With these alien machines, Hiccup never knew.

The hair on the back of his neck prickled, and Hiccup shivered. He'd been traveling with the Doctor too long. Everything worried him. Too long? Hiccup smiled. That implied time. He had no idea how long he had been living here. A year, a month, six months, a few weeks, an hour? It was one of those questions he pondered late at "night" in bed. Did time pass here? Did time exist here? Could living beings live without the existence of time? Asking the Doctor probably wouldn't give him any answers - most likely more questions instead.

Something banged a few feet away. Hiccup froze. He could hear his heart tapping a frantic beat. "Doc?" His nervous question echoed through the TARDIS. There was no answer. Hiccup stumbled back, but something tripped him up. The Doctor had always lectured him on leaving his stuff around. Hiccup never thought it would cause an actual serious problem.

His thoughts darted in circles. Who could be in here? The Doctor had cloaked the TARDIS, hadn't he? Hiccup had poked his head out the door to check.

He'd cloaked it. That by itself was worrying. Usually the Doctor parked his darling blue box wherever he pleased with no concern for anyone's surprise at seeing the box. He only cloaked it when there was a strong - stronger than usual, anyway - threat.

The Doctor had also . . .

Despite his terror, Hiccup frowned. He'd been furious when the Doctor demanded that Hiccup stay in here for this adventure.

"\_Doc, you know I can han-\_"

"\_No, Hiccup!" \_Hiccup had frozen at the stony fury chiseled onto the Time Lord's face. \_"You- you stay in here! You don't leave! You don't come out! No matter what happens, you don't come out - is that understood?"\_ Hiccup had stood still as the Doctor turned, stalked towards the doors.

He'd barely heard what the Doctor had growled beneath his breath. \_"They've taken too much from me already\_."

The Doctor's shoulders slumped. Hiccup could fear the bitter pain radiating from his twin hearts. It was the only reason he'd stayed in the TARDIS.

Oh, come on, Hiccup! The teen almost smacked himself in the head. He had his cellphone, with a flashlight app. Genius, Hiccup, just

genius. His own sharp brain awed him. Hiccup's fingers fumbled for his back left pocket. He felt cool plastic and yanked at it. His phone slid out easily, and Hiccup held it in front of his nose. With a tap of the power button, the lock-screen showed. It was- well, the Doctor had a laughing fit when he saw it. But it had been a very good picture of her . . .

Hiccup dragged the lock screen, and the home screen showed. "C'mon, c'mon, flashlight, flashlight," Hiccup murmured, fingertips tapping at the buttons. Finally the flashlight application flashed on the screen. Hiccup tapped it, then looked up, waving his phone in front of him.

"\_Holy\_-"

That was the creepiest statue he'd ever seen.

"Oh, hilarious, Doc," Hiccup yelled into the dark. "A fanged angel. I'm so scared." He stepped back, looking around - while keeping an eye on that angel. Who would even carve such a creepy-looking thing? True, it would do wonders for security, but it would probably ruin the view of any garden.

The cellphone, presuming Hiccup was preoccupied with other matters, went to sleep. The TARDIS plunged into darkness. Almost immediately, something scraped across the floor.

Hiccup scowled and quickly turned the phone back on.

He was certain he jumped at least a foot in the air. The angel was closer . . . and different. Its hands were reaching toward him. Hiccup eyed the pointed nails nervously. Something didn't add up. The Doctor couldn't have switched statues in a matter of seconds. He wasn't \_that \_strong.

Hiccup blinked.

It was closer.

Hiccup leaped back. His arm shook as he held the phone in front of him.

The phone slept again. This time, Hiccup just turned it on and swiveled the screen to face the angel.

Even closer. Mouth gaping wider. Were those bloodstains on her teeth? The shadows weren't helping.

Hiccup felt the wall behind him. He slid down against it, eyes wide as he stared at the screeching statue. Don't blink. His eyes watered, desperately pleading for respite. No, he couldn't. His entire body shook.

He didn't want to be weak. He hated calling for the Doctor. He didn't want to need help.

Another blink. The thing's arms were almost at his neck.

"Doctor!" The scream ripped from his throat and echoed around the TARDIS. Hiccup screamed again, his voice creating incoherent ripples

of terror. "\_Doc\_!"

## 9. Toothless

\*\*I know that after that chapter, you were probably feeding your fingernails through your teeth. I'd love to say this chapter is a continuation of that chapter . . . but alas, River Song style does not allow such things. Don't worry, you'll definitely find out what happens! As for right now, I'd like to take some time to thank y'all for paying such kind and loving attention to my story. It means a lot, and I appreciate your reviews, follows, and favorites. I have decided to honor requests for Toothless. As this chapter has been sitting in my email for a while, I decided to finish it and publish it. Remember that I own no rights to Hiccup, the Doctor, and company.\*\*

\* \* \*

><p>Hiccup glanced down at the faded map clenched in his fingers. "Yeah, great map," he grumbled. "It would be even better if it was in a language I could read." He didn't want to admit he was lost, but there was no way around it. For what seemed like hours, he'd been wandering in the forest " or whatever you could call this place, as it certainly didn't look like any forest Hiccup had seen on Earth. For example, most of the trees had roots spread out at the top of their trunks, with a thick, almost fluffy bed of leaves at the bottom. Hiccup supposed the roots probably got more water this way, but he couldn't imagine how the trees were still upright. Definitely, he admitted as he shivered at the cold weather, the leaves were getting enough sunlight. Did they even need sunlight? He blinked, staring up at the two pale gold suns hovering in the sky. A bright red, birdlike shape shot across the sky, and Hiccup jumped. Another interesting thing about the planet of Erthukî±ï•nî† " the pests.<p>

Dragons.

He'd felt a thrill in his heart when the Doctor had told him before they had left the TARDIS. When they'd met the Prime " the leader, apparently " of the planet, Hiccup had belted out as many questions as he could fathom about the unusual animals populating this world. Eventually, the Prime, glowering, had yanked a map out of her cloak and shoved it in Hiccup's direction. He had been too excited and too calloused to care about her attitude. Instead, he had snatched the map, studying it intently before leaping off the rocks and racing off toward the forest.

"Don't go too far!" the Doctor had called after him.

"I won't," Hiccup had yelled over his shoulder.

"Don't get eaten!" the Doctor added.

"I'll really try not to!"

Since then, he'd seen at least six species of dragons, and something that was camouflaged so well that he knew it had to be something dragonesque. He'd noticed that most of them seemed very primitive in speech " yes, he could understand them. That was the scientific



marvel of the TARDIS riders. Hiccup had only heard the dragons conversing about three major topics: food, danger, and . . . well, mating.

"Whoah!" Hiccup yelped as the ground suddenly disappeared beneath his feet. He screamed " and he'd later berate himself for having such a wimpy, girly scream " as he fell through the air. Hiccup saw sharp, glistening rocks below, and a whimper escaped from his lips. I can't die here, he thought in a panic. I can't.

His fingers fumbled for the cliff blurred beside him. He felt rocks ripping through his skin, and he howled at the pain. Finally, he caught hold of a miniscule ledge. Every muscle in his arms stretched painfully. Hiccup hissed through his teeth. He was hurt, but alive. Trying not to move too much, he twisted his neck to look around. He was halfway down a huge, sunlit cove. It was pretty, but near-death situations didn't leave much time for sightseeing. He swallowed the bile forming in his throat as he gazed down at the rocks below. Stuck - he was definitely stuck. His arms shook with exertion. The teen scanned the cliff. It was dotted with mossy ledges, definitely slippery but perhaps just what he needed to safely move to the ground.

He swung a foot to a ledge just below him. After lodging the toe of his converse into the ledge as much as he could, he searched for a ledge for his hands. A foot below his current hand position, he found one. Carefully balancing weight on his foot, he slowly moved one hand at a time downwards. His other foot found another ledge. He worked tediously, nervously, weakly. Minutes felt like hours - or were they truly hours? Finally, Hiccup glanced down to see the ground beneath him. He hopped down, his arms tender and sore. He'd need to work out more in the future. Massaging his muscles, he turned around.

Another girly scream ripped from his throat. He leaped back. That was definitely a dragon.

Its acidic green eyes stared unblinkingly forward. With his own eyes, Hiccup traced the beast - the shivering muscles, batlike wings, gleaming scales, athletic build, and razor claws. The teen flattened his body against the cliff. He knew he was trapped. Don't get eaten? Right.

Maybe he could trade his life for something. Slowly, he slid his fingers into his pockets. He felt the cool screen of his now cracked cellphone. More cool metal - more grooved - that must be the TARDIS key. There was thin, warped plastic from the wrappings of little candies he'd bought in a market somewhere. Why had he eaten those so quickly? Hiccup had no bargaining material, unless dragons had a secret affinity for plastic candy wrappers.

Hiccup glanced at the dragon again, avoiding eye contact. The beast was almost . . . cat-like. Hiccup had a cat when he was little. It was a deranged, unkind old thing with matted fur that fello out in clumps. The only time Hiccup had spent with that ornery animal was when he had a shiny object in his hands . . .

Hiccup slid his cellphone out of his pocket. He glanced up at the beams of sunlight streaming into the cove. One hit just above his shoulder. Slowly Hiccup lifted his cellphone to the light. "Nice dragon," he mumbled when the dragon snarled at his movement. "Do you

like light? I betcha do." He angled his cellphone so that a little square of light landed on the ground in front of the black terror.

The dragon's demeanor changed. He stared at the reflection in fascination. A paw jutted forward to catch it, and Hiccup quickly tilted his phone. The reflection jerked to the right. The dragon seemed to forget Hiccup entirely. Its pupils enlarged in thrill of the chase and it pounced on the reflection again. Hiccup tilted his phone time after time, watching as the dragon rolled, wiggled, crept, and bounced after the light. Its tail wiggled back and forth, and a laugh rolled out of Hiccup's mouth. The dragon cast him a delighted glance, then continued pursuit of the little light.

Hiccup, on impulse, moved the white square just a few feet in front of himself. The dragon raced after it, but his gaze suddenly moved from the reflection and onto Hiccup.

Hiccup, having no clue what to do, smiled. "Hey," he mumbled through his teeth.

The dragon studied him for a second. Then, sitting on his rear haunches, the dragon focused completely on Hiccup's face. His lips wiggled. They twisted and struggled and wobbled. Suddenly, pink gums showed as the dragon's face lit up in a . . . smile?

"Huh," Hiccup breathed, his smile faltering a bit in amazement. He could barely believe it. A smiling dragon. A toothless dragon! "Toothless? I could have sworn you had-"

The dragon tensed at his voice. Sharp white teeth shot out of his gums, his pupils narrowed, and he roared in Hiccup's face. Then he raced off, into a grove of trees into the corner.

Hiccup's jaw dropped. All thoughts of returning to the TARDIS forgotten, he stumbled after the dragon. "Toothless," he muttered to himself in amazement. "Toothless."

## 10. Forgetting

"Hello, this is Candace Lindstrom, calling from Perez College for Miss Astrid Hofferson!"

It was enough to make her puke. The same obviously scripted lines from all over the country. She dropped her phone into her wastebasket, knowing she'd end up digging it out later. The over-caffinated admission rep's voice echoed in the tin shell, and Astrid huffed at it. A strand of her long blond hair drifted out of her ponytail, and she made a swipe at it. Then, giving up, the girl slid her finger through her hairband and yanked at it. Everything came flopping onto her fingers, tangles and all. There was no glamour in lacrosse, but judging from the looks the football team gave her when their practice times matched up, she still retained a certain appeal.

That was nice to know. Unfortunately, every guy at their school seemed all too eager to let her know.

In moments like these, Astrid hated it all. The exhaustion kicked

down some mental barrier and let everything flood her brain. She was tired of the college calls and the doting texts and the trophies. She joined lacrosse in middle school so she could forget it all. On the field, there were you and your team and the ball and the net. Nothing else mattered. Thinking about anything else was pointless. She couldn't solve all her problems on the field; she could only run from them. In the end, Astrid preferred that.

Then all the drama came along. The lean grace that came with exercise made boys stumble over their own drool. The winning games that came with good goals made colleges chase after her. The announcement of yet another win for high school girls' varsity volleyball boxed her in with the jocks. So what if she liked books, and Star Trek, and screamo, and video games? She had to be a jock. No other group would allow her.

Astrid rolled onto her bed and stared at her ceiling fan. The cleaning lady had visited today, so it was blowing the chemical smell out the window. She rubbed her arms at the chill. She couldn't turn it off. A suffocating blanket of hopelessness fell on her. She couldn't stop anything. She couldn't turn anything off.

In that moment, a rock sailed through her open window.

"Holy-! I thought it was closed!"

Reflexes propelled Astrid to her feet in a milisecond.  
"Hello?"

"A-Astrid?" The voice cracked like a broken music note.

Her toes curled in as she inched toward the window. Obviously it was a guy from her school. Maybe he was a theater kid - opting for the "romantic" approach of throwing a stone at a window. Most of the jocks wouldn't be that stupid, because they knew if they threw a rock, they'd have a broken window rather than a girlfriend. It could be a shy nerd who watched some movies to figure out how to ask a girl out. The voice didn't match anyone she knew, but it did seem slightly familiar.

Astrid squinted through the darkness outdoors to the figure standing just outside her window. She would need more light to see him any better. Sprinting to her closet, she snatched her camping flashlight from a hook on the door. Thank God for an organized room. Even as she rushed back to the window, her fingers had found the switch. Astrid swung the beam of light across her forested backyard. After a few moments, the light found a face.

"Gah! My eyes!" The boy's arms flailed wildly before hovering in front of his eyes. "Nice to see you too, Astrid."

She didn't know him. This lanky guy in an "Imagine Dragons" t-shirt and jeans was completely strange to her. So how did he know her name.

Summoning up her famous steely voice, she questioned, "Do I know you?"

The boy lowered his arms, presumably to give her a better view of his face. His eyes were squinted tightly shut from the light. If Astrid

squinted, she could see his feathery brown hair brushing his freckled nose. It could be dirt, or pimples, though. No - freckles. That detail surprised her. She didn't know this guy but she knew he had freckles?

"I'm going to ask again. Do I know you?"

He mumbled something. As low as it was, she could tell his voice had spiked again.

"Can't hear you," she growled, blue eyes flipping to the stars before settling back on him.

His voice quirked up at the end, making his sentence seem like requests to continue existing. "Hamish?"

\_Hamish. Good God, Hamish.\_

The flashlight slipped from her suddenly sweaty palm. She snatched it before it could fall to the grass below. "Hamish!"

"Yeah?"

"No! I mean-" she struggled for words, for comprehension. The last time Astrid had seen Hamish Haddock, he had been shoving her towards the exit of the building, screaming like a maniac for her to run. The fire behind him had roared. She had been fourteen, and too stupid to wonder why he wasn't following her - why his face was masked with pain, why his leg didn't look like a \_leg\_ anymore. "You- you're supposed to be dead!"

There was a silence marked only by the screeches of crickets. Before she could stop herself, her fingers angled the flashlight at his left leg. The jeans covered most of it up. Astrid's mouth caught in her throat as the light hit the small metal peg jutting out of his jeans.

Her eyes adjusted to the dark now, she looked up into Hamish's face. His eyes were incomprable. She felt her jaw lower.

"I'm dead?" She knew it was stupid, but she had to ask.

Hamish's lips quirked up in a crooked fashion. "No, according to you, \_I'm \_dead."

Astrid remembered his biting humor now. It came to her like a heat wave - before the bullying at school started, he was \_funny\_. She had been a serious little priss in middle school, but even she had to slap her hands over her mouth when he cracked a joke in study hall. Even now, her mouth was twitching up to match his. She tried to scowl.

"Not funny."

"Would you like to go on a date with a dead guy?"

Her spine stiffened. Hamish's eyes were wide now, no doubt realizing how far from suave he had been.

"I- what?" She choked on her own words.

"Well, you think I'm dead, right?" he sputtered out, trying to recover. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to go on a date with a dead guy."

Later Astrid would wonder why she reacted the way she did. She could - should - have fumbled for the yellow pages to find Mayor Haddock's number, to spew out the news that his son had never died in that fire. She could have screamed bloody murder, or rubbed her eyes, or backed away, or called the police, or run and hide. She could have even used that rock as a weapon.

Maybe, though, she missed the bliss of being with someone who didn't know her enough to judge her. Maybe she owed something to that boy in the factory who had saved her life. Maybe she wanted the feeling of forgetting the pressures and expectations and normalcy that lacrosse had failed to give her.

Who knows? All Astrid knew for certain was the word tumbling out of her mouth, the one she'd never regret.

"Okay."

## 11. Mother

At first, the Doctor didn't understand why Hiccup had acted so strangely. Sure, they had landed in a parallel universe, but that didn't mean much to him. Yet Hiccup was staring at the house they had landed in front of - a modest two story home surrounded by trees - like he had found the Holy Grail (in the Doctor's opinion, bit of a let-down). When a woman in faded jeans hopped out the front door and began to water the flowers, Hiccup's knees buckled. He just sat there, on the street in front of the TARDIS, staring. The woman gave him a few perplexed glances, but otherwise continued in her work.

"Hiccup, she's not \_that \_impressive."

"Okay, okay, very nice, things to see!"

"It's not a very pretty house, is it?"

"Thank goodness she's watering the flowers. I can't stand dead flowers."

"Alright, Hiccup, get \_up!"\_

Nothing worked. Hiccup didn't move. He barely blinked.

And then the Doctor's eyes drifted to Hiccup's shoe. Then it all made sense.

The shoe was old, scruffy from years of use. There were dirt stains all over it and the laces were grimy from all Hiccup's adventures. The Doctor didn't question Hiccup's fashion sense (he would never get over that ridiculous scarf he used to wear) but he did question why Hiccup had kept the second one after his "accident". Plus, Hiccup frequently cleaned the blasted things. They weren't even nice shoes!

But the woman was wearing the exact same pair. Less grimy, less beaten, but the same pair. And that was when the Doctor remembered what Hiccup had said, eventually, about this one precious pair of shoes.

"\_They â€| they were my mother's."\_

"Oh."

The Doctor could see the similarities. The lean figure and forest green eyes were definitely common traits in the two, and the Doctor could see a trace of Hiccup's jerky, awkward motions in her more graceful movement.

"\_She left. One day she just left."\_

Sometimes the Doctor wondered why so many of his more recent companions had lost a parent. Donna and Rose had lost their fathers, Clara her mother, and Amy, at one point, had lost both her parents.

"\_The police found her car, with me in it, and there were signs of a struggle, but she was gone."\_

All the Doctor could do was rest an arm on Hiccup's shoulder. "It's alright," he said. For once, he couldn't think of anything to say. A lot of quantum physics came to mind, but that wouldn't help.

A loud cry came from the kitchen, and the Doctor instinctively reached for his sonic. But the woman sighed, tossed a strand of frizzy auburn hair out of her eyes, and called, "I'm coming, sweetheart. Wait for your mother!"

"\_I was a baby, and she was gone."\_

Hiccup's torso stiffened as the woman retreated into the house. Less than a moment later, she appeared-

With a small, skinny baby on her hip.

>Hiccup's breath stopped and the Doctor could only stare.<p>

"My little Hiccup," the woman crooned softly, straightening the dragon shirt the baby was wearing. "Did you have a bad dream again?"

She swept her hand across the yard and wrapped both arms around the baby, her forehead resting against his.

>"Daddy will be home soon. Do you miss Daddy?" The baby smiled widely at his mother.<p>

"She's alive." Hiccup's voice was barely louder than a whisper, but the pain was easily distinguishable.

The Doctor couldn't let him think that. Though it pained his hearts, he bent down and whispered, "That's not your mother, Hiccup. That's another person very similar to your mother. But she's not â€| yours."

Hiccup's voice cracked as he replied, "But she's alive! She never

left. She's still here." Suddenly he jerked to face the Doctor. "Take me forward."

The Doctor knew almost instantly, but he couldn't process it. "What?"

"I want to go forward in time." Hiccup spoke with a desperate urgency. "Please."

"Hiccup-"

"I need to know he gets a happy ending!" Hiccup's voice rose, and the woman cast a worried glance their way. The Doctor gave her an awkward smile. But Hiccup had him by the shirt collar suddenly. The Doctor looked at him. He just wanted a happy ending in some universe. It didn't matter which one.

"It won't make you feel better," the Doctor whispered.

"I don't care." Hiccup spoke with iron in his voice.

There was a pause.

"Alright," the Doctor said, sighing. He knew what was coming. But still he repeated, "Alright."

## 12. Cowboys and Angels

"\_Hiccup!\_"\_

Never had Hiccup ever been happier to hear the Doctor scream his name. Without interrupting his gaze at the fanged statue, he shrieked, "Here! Doc! Here!"

Through his peripheral vision, Hiccup saw the Doctor appear, sweaty and panting, at his side. "Keep your eyes on it," the Time Lord hissed frantically.

"I got that, thanks," Hiccup murmured. The Doctor in a split second thrust his hand between Hiccup and the statue. It took a moment for Hiccup to realize what the Doctor was holding.

"A compact mirror?"

"Her eyes are open."

Hiccup would have grinned if he wasn't in such a panic. "So she's looking at herself! She can't move!" His neck cracked as he angled it to face the Doctor. The man was glaring fiercely at the statue, and Hiccup's stomach felt tight. The Doctor and the Angel had an unsettled past.

"You thought you could take him too," the Doctor murmured, his face narrow, dark, and pointed. "You're wrong. I don't make those mistakes any more."

Clearing his throat, Hiccup inched slowly away from the statue's outstretched hands. "How are we going to get it out of here?"

The Doctor's eyebrows scrunched together. "Wellâ€¦ I- we could-maybeâ€¦"

Hiccup blinked at the statue â€" how good blinking felt! He felt a bit stupid. Just a minute ago he was about to die, and here he was thanking God for his power to blink. Never would he take such basic bodily functions lightly again. He only had one idea. It was a stupid idea. But if the Doctor had no ideas, then a stupid idea was better than nothing. "Lasso?"

Silence.

"That is a stupid idea," the Doctor said.

Hiccup nodded.

"And it just might work."

Ten minutes later, after some scrounging around in previously unnoticed TARDIS cabinets and drawers, Hiccup was standing about seven feet away from the statue, holding a ridiculously long multicolored scarf in his hands. Hopefully the loop he had tied at the end was just large enough. The Doctor cast a doubtful look at it. He grumbled something about it coming in handy someday, then thrust the mirror at Hiccup. The teen positioned it in front of the statue's eyes and watched as the Doctor grabbed the scarf.

A long moment passed. The Doctor glared at the statue. Hiccup sucked in a breath.

"\_Yee-haw!"\_ Yelping, the Doctor swung the lasso above his head. With one fluid motion, he cast it over the statue. Hiccup stared as it slowly descended onto the angel, almost too perfectly. As soon as the loop fell past the statue's hands, the Doctor yanked and the loop tightened to the monster's waist.

Hiccup breathed again. He relaxed.

"Hiccup, the mirror!" Hiccup jumped. The angel had moved. It seemed if possible even more menacing than usual, its mouth gaping wider, its tongue sticking out, its wings extended. Hiccup shoved the mirror in the angel's face. He heard the Doctor sigh in relief, but he could also sense the eye rolling.

"Sorry," Hiccup muttered weakly.

The Doctor inhaled slowly. "I'm going to need help tugging it out. Don't you move, I'll be back in a heartbeat."

The boy's heart jumped to his throat. "Doc!"

"Yes, Hiccup!" He could sense the exasperation.

Hiccup's knees trembled slightly. "The lightsâ€¦" he murmured. Suddenly the Doctor appeared in front of him, taking the mirror from him.

"You go get help," the Doctor ordered. "I've dealt with the Angels before." He was trying to appear gruff, but the worried glance he cast at Hiccup gave him away.



Hiccup ran to the doors as fast as he could. The image of leaving the Doctor alone with the Angel in the TARDIS did not sit well with him.

A bright blue figure greeted him outside the door. At first, Hiccup had trouble remembering the TARDIS had translating abilities. Now he didn't even hesitate. "We need manpower. There's an Angel in there. We have to tug it out." The figure bobbed its head, six eyes lowering in acknowledgement.

It felt like forever before the figure returned, joined by four heavily armored others. Hiccup nodded at them and jogged into the TARDIS. He heaved a sigh of relief to see the Doctor, completely fine, standing in front of the still roped Angel and holding the mirror. The five figures wasted no time, sprinting to the scarf and grabbing it.

With excruciatingly loud shrieking and grinding noises, Hiccup and the blue figures tugged and struggled with the rope. The angel occasionally tried to move in the opposite direction whenever the Doctor struggled with the mirror. They finally pulled it out the door, but only when Hiccup felt his arms might fall off from pure exhaustion. Hiccup watched as the creatures began bustling about, ordering other figures about and slowly amassing an arsenal of fancy looking equipment around the Angel.

"They'll take care of it," the Doctor said, answering anything Hiccup could have asked. "They're very advanced creatures. There are a few ways to dispense of Angels." He glared at the statue. "None of which are quite inhumane enough." Hiccup shivered. After a whispered conversation with one of the blue figures, the Doctor pulled Hiccup into the TARDIS. The doors swung shut behind them and the two slowly walked to the console.

After a pause, Hiccup felt a laugh tumble out of his mouth. The Doctor stared at him.

Hiccup felt almost hysterical. He grabbed onto the console to steady himself as he laughed harder and harder. "You just- you just lassoed an angel."

The Doctor's stony, serious face melted away and he grinned widely. "I would make an excellent cowboy, partner," he crowed.

End  
file.